

# Gavilan Peak's Mandarin Immersion FAQ's

## 1. Why is Gavilan Peak's Mandarin Program being phased out?

- Enrollment at Gavilan Peak has been steadily declining in recent years. Currently, the number of incoming kindergarten students is not sufficient to support two teachers for the Mandarin Immersion program. As a result, the program will begin a gradual phase-out. Starting next school year, kindergarten Mandarin Immersion will no longer be offered. Each subsequent year, the program will phase out one grade level at a time, with the current kindergarten class being the last to complete the program, graduating from Gavilan Peak in 2034.

## 2. Why is there a decrease in enrollment at Gavilan Peak?

- The decline in enrollment at Gavilan Peak reflects a broader trend affecting many schools in Anthem. Factors contributing to this decline include the availability of Empowerment Scholarship Account (ESA) vouchers, an increase in homeschooling, and the ongoing presence of charter schools, which provide families with multiple educational options outside of traditional public schools.

## 3. Since enrollment in Anthem has declined, would one of the elementary schools close?

- At this time, there are no plans to close any elementary schools in Anthem. However, boundary adjustments may be considered in the future to accommodate changing enrollment patterns, but no decisions have been made at this point.

## 4. Will Gavilan Peak have Mandarin for specials again?

- Yes, Gavilan Peak plans to offer Mandarin as a special area class again next year.

## 5. What things have been done to help promote the Mandarin Program in the community?

- Over the years, several efforts have been made to increase awareness and enrollment in the Mandarin Program. These include outreach visits to local preschools to promote kindergarten enrollment, hosting informational booths at Anthem Days, and offering parent information sessions to highlight the benefits of the program. On campus, student performances, school tours, and community partnerships have helped showcase the value of Mandarin Immersion and engage families in the program.

## 6. Are TSMC families considering Gavilan Peak?

- Many TSMC families currently reside south of Anthem and enroll their children in other DVUSD schools. Many of these families prefer full English immersion rather than a Mandarin Immersion program, as their children already speak Mandarin at home. Another consideration is that Taiwanese families typically use traditional Chinese characters, whereas Gavilan Peak's program teaches simplified characters.
- That said, the district has been actively working to connect with TSMC families. A liaison has been established to facilitate communication, and informational resources—including videos, website content, and testimonials from TSMC families—have been shared to encourage enrollment at Gavilan Peak.

## 7. Is it possible to bring the program back?

- To consider keeping the program open, minimally 23 kindergarten students would need to enroll in the Mandarin Immersion Program for the 2025-26 SY. If the program is phased out next year but there is significant interest in the future, DVUSD may explore the possibility of

reinstating it. However, long-term sustainability is also a key factor, as enrollment must account for potential attrition as students progress through the program.

#### 8. Are other Mandarin Programs closing?

- No, other Mandarin Immersion programs in the district are continuing. Desert Sage Elementary will maintain its K-6 Mandarin Immersion Program, as it is not experiencing enrollment challenges. Additionally, Las Brisas and Diamond Canyon will continue offering Mandarin as a special area class. At the middle and high school levels, Hillcrest Middle School, Sandra Day O'Connor High School, and Boulder Creek High School will also continue offering Mandarin classes.

#### 9. Was this decision impacted by the M&O Override?

- Yes, the M&O Override helps fund salaries and staffing. With enrollment numbers declining at Gavilan Peak, DVUSD must make fiscally responsible decisions to ensure that resources are allocated efficiently. The decision to phase out the Mandarin Immersion Program reflects the district's effort to balance available funding with student enrollment and program sustainability.

#### 10. How many teachers will we lose this year?

- Gavilan Peak will lose four positions this year; however, only two teachers will be leaving the school. The district is making efforts to support its staff by offering positions at other DVUSD schools, ensuring that teachers have opportunities to remain employed within the district.

#### 11. What can we do to help with enrollment?

Parents and community members can support the Mandarin Immersion Program in several ways:

- **Spread the word** – Share informational videos and resources with families, on parent forums, and within your community. Encourage friends and neighbors to consider enrolling their children.
- **Leave positive reviews** – Write reviews highlighting Gavilan Peak's Mandarin Immersion Program on platforms like Niche Schools, GreatSchools, and Google to increase awareness and interest.
- **Stay connected with DVUSD Leadership and School Board** - Remain informed and engage with district leadership and school board discussions.
- **Engage with local preschools** – Inform preschool families about the program and encourage them to explore Mandarin Immersion for their children.
- **Connect with local businesses and organizations** – Partner with businesses, cultural organizations, and community groups to promote the program and showcase its benefits.
- **Attend school events** – Support Mandarin-focused events, student performances, and cultural celebrations to help demonstrate the program's value.
- **Utilize social media** – Share success stories, student achievements, and program updates on social media to reach a broader audience.
- **Encourage alumni engagement** – Connect with former Mandarin Immersion students and families to share their experiences and help advocate for the program.